The Wanderer

Channing

THE WANDERER.

A COLLOQUIAL POEM.

BY

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

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The Dedication.

I DREAMED a star from unknown skies
Was shining on the narrow earth:
Or was the beauty from her eyes
The light that gave my spirit birth?

I dreamed the spring caressed the flowers,
And sunshine danced about the tree:
Or was the light, its golden showers,
That soft perfume, thy modesty?

Across the sea thy beauty came
To this far shore so darkly chill;
But now a voice, how sweet! I hear,
And those pure eyes — I see them still, —

A richer hope and nobler traits,
The dowry of a splendid race, —
Oh let us ask the hurrying fates
To leave the spell in Liza's face!

PREFACE.

THE editor of this volume, who has urged the author to permit its publication, and charged himself with its care, has submitted a part of it to my inspection, and requested me to insert in the book my impressions. It is proper to own, that the author has not been consulted, or even informed of this interference, which it is not certain that he will pardon. But the editor affirms his own rectitude.

I would fain conciliate any generous reader by suggesting that there is new matter and new spirit in this writing; that, if the poems are imperfect according to our received canons, they yet point to new art: as the first daguerres were grim things enough, yet showed that a great engine had been invented. These poems are genuinely original, with a simplicity of plan which allows the writer to leave out all the prose of artificial transitions, — a series of sketches of natural objects, such as abound in New England, inwreathed by the thoughts they suggest to the contemplative pilgrim, —

"Unsleeping truths by which moves on heaven's prime."

Here is a naturalist who sees the flower and the bird with a poet's curiosity and awe, — does not count the stamens in the aster, nor the feathers in the wood-thrush, but rests in the surprise and affection they awaken. His interest in nature is not pedantic, much less culinary, but insatiably curious of the hint it gives of its cause, and its relation to man. All his use of it is free and searching, and with too much sympathy to affect more than is compelled.

The author has one essential talent of his art, — surprise. In the "Poets' Corner" of the newspaper we read a line or a stanza, and, perceiving that we can guess the rest, turn to the telegraphic news. But the reader of "The Mountain" must proceed to the end of the canto. We like the poet whose thought we cannot predict, and whose mind is so full of genuine knowledge, that we are sure to be enriched by every verse.

I dare not offer this little volume as a sure prize to the circulating libraries. This book requires a good reader, — a lover and inquirer of nature; and such a one will find himself rewarded. I can easily believe that many a reader and perhaps writer of popular poetry will, after short experiment, turn away with disdain from this rude pamphlet, and thank his stars that his culture has made him incapable of pleasure from such charcoal-sketching. But I confide that the lover of woods and hillsides, and the true philosopher, will search, with increasing curiosity, records of nature and

thought so novel and sincere. Here is Hamlet in the fields with never a thought to waste even on Horatio's opinion of his sallies. Plainly the author is a man of large reading in a wide variety of studies ; but his books have not tamed his invincible personality.

I confess to a certain impatience of a needless or even wilful neglect of rhythm in a poet who has sometimes shown a facility and grace in this art which promised to outdo his rivals, and now risks offence by harshness. The reader may reasonably ask, "Is not rhythm worth the study of the poet?" But I remember we once had in Massachusetts a highly-esteemed painter, who was color-blind, and who, after working long on his picture, was forced to call in a friend to tell him whether he had not been using umber instead of cobalt in sketching his sky. One would think the poet before us had fits of deafness to rhythm, and was too impatient, or loved and trusted his fancy too entirely, to risk a critical study of metre. If color-blind painters, why not rhythm-deaf poets, or with that defect at certain hours, when the inspiration is not yet on? Or why should not that befall the bard which has befallen some famed orators, who, when they begin to speak, hesitate and stammer, but, warming with their subject, surmount every barrier, and suddenly command themselves and their audience.

If there is neglect of conventional ornament and of correct finish, which even looks a little studied, as if the poet crip-

pled his pentameters to challenge notice to a subtler melody, yet here are strokes of skill which recall the great masters. Here is the mountain truly pictured, the upland day, the upland night, the perpetual home of the wind, and every hint of the primeval agencies noted ; and the thoughts which these bring to youth and to maturity. There is nothing conventional in the theme or the illustration, — no, but "thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers," and pictures seen by an instructed eye.

Perhaps we may even thank the poet, who, in his verse, does not regard the public. It is written to himself, — is his forest or street experience ; the record of his moods, fancies, observations, and studies, and will interest good readers as such. He confides in his own bias for meditation and writing. He will write, as he has ever written, — whether he has readers or not. But his poems have to me and to others an exceptional value for this reason, — we have not been considered in their composition, but either defied or forgotten, and therefore consult them securely as photographs.

R. W. E.

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WOOD.

THE WANDERER.

I.

THE WOOD.

ALL through the wood I walked : I sought the glade
Where the soft uncut grass makes fittest paths,
And by the pine harp-shaped, of Erin's bards
Or Welsh Cadwallader, or lady graced
To touch the sounding-strings, oft musing, —
Next I reached the eminence whence we look
Down on the village.

That small country-place,
Much domineered by elms (the fathers' care
By each new house to set a votive plant, —

Custom long dead), I sometimes paused to view, —
Not high with palace-walls, or storied keep ;
Nor mossy abbeys, green in ivy bright ;
Nor towering steeples, mentors of the sky, —
And sometimes heard such bell-notes as it has,
Sound out the common hour, or mortals' years,
Slow tolling from the wrinkled hand of one
Who meekly pulls the rope ; and saw the smoke
Rise gradual, as the evening meal progressed,
Product of artists from a foreign strand.
Not wholly strange to me the far-off roofs
That flung, like Virgil's, taller shades at eve,
Nor greatly prized.

I sometimes heard,
Rising in intervals, the speechless wind
Sough through the pines, and touch the whispering oa
leaf
In these wintry days, and whiff the snow-cloud
In the chill traveller's face. Not all alone,
Seeing the clouds go over the tall woods,
With patches of blue sky still intermixed,

Or spidery interlacings, as the sun,
Now lowering, drew bright webs out of the twigs,
And sometimes, in the pine, shot out his rays
Prismatic, — fringes of blue, gold, and red, —
Contrived, I think, for fit society,
Such as the titmice or the rabbit, scared
As each new nimble bound echoes his taps
Along the unheeding wood.

How still and spare!
Silent and dedicate the woodland spaces,
As the day's last hour, in dead of winter,
Counts upon the trees its lifeless dirges!
Was there no secret hidden deep in thee,
Thou faltering Silence? Hast thou never asked
Who's coming? standing there, the falling leaf
Alone thy monitor, or wandering breath
Of the unthoughtful air, or partridge-whirr,
Fearing our race as much as we fear thine.
All day the winter sun has spoiled the snow
On all the southern slopes, — melted it off,

And brought the russet forth, coin of the pine.
You almost think there might have lurked a breath
Of mute relenting in the eager frost
That hangs about you like a nettle robe,
Making the pulses ebb ; but Winter's will
Designs more malice, and must chill to the end.

Well, I could pray, — could kneel, and beg the power
That keeps the voiceless solitude for such
As I, to intermit the old decrees,
The fixed resolve, that, in these northern climes,
Killing is the true fact of sharpest frost.
And yet his livelong inattention proves
His skin to hang far looser than my own.
And then fancy the dull man wandering round
As I, vexing the sly world with questions,
Heard his queries solved and plainly answered :
Came, by some taste of learning, to the sense
Of all the senseless facts, — both heat and cold ;
Four seasons and two poles ; two suns a-top ;
An earth forever spinning to defeat,

Forever spinning to be brave again ;
To-day the mute withdrawal ; then the bound,
From whence exudes the multifarious kind, —
To walk a pale colossus o'er the dust !
Conceive I held all, clearly explicate,
Here in my hand : might I so front the wood ?
Should it not flout and leer ? cast grinning outlooks ?
Or ask me why I came, the pet of Nature,
With my well-oiled locks to laugh at them,
Poor pensioners, in their rinds straitly enclosed,
And sometimes half allowed to drop a nut,
Cheap accident, if it live ? Shall I, the heir
Of this poor wintry ancestor, insist
That I should probe the secret to disclose
The end of Nature's bashfulness, as if
Her breath were sweet as Persian amulet
In her face the shining curls of Helena,
And beauty's eyelash ?

Wait ! Decided closely,
He who much strives to stay the longest leaves

A little later than the earliest called,
Says a few words, arranges a few facts,
Then drops the veil, and enters Nature's hall.
I hurry forward where the leafless trees
Are wrapped in silence, as the red cold light
Of January's sunset touches each
As with a fire of icicles, — how calm !
Oh ! transient gleams yon hurrying noisy train,
Its yellow carriages rumbling with might
Of volleyed thunder on the iron rail
Pieced by the humble toil of Erin's hand,
Wood and lake the whistle shrill awakening.
Transient, — contrast with the unthinking cold,
The ruddy glare of sunset in the west,
And the first flicker of the icy stars,
While the pale freezing moon calmly assists
To point their rays more sharp, — transient and stern !
To-morrow the cold loam spreads over man,
His swelling plans crushed out so utterly,
The deadest of the dead is no more sure ;
But bright the snow-drift in the still moonshine ;

Bright, as the crystal spicules cleave the air
In shivers ; and the more alone he walks
Whose friends that were sleep in *another* land,
Or those who loved in youth now hate his name.

Brief trace of man goes in these wintry fields, —
A slow, consumptive figure sometime comes
To glean for scattered sticks, or rake his chip,
His poor Bucephalus a wheelbarrow ;
And farther, in the margin of the piece,
A cottage light, precedent of a race
Who rise as far in Nature as her knees,
Wherein they much ignore that Nature lives.
And, in the days made mild by winter thaws,
I sometimes tracked the salient river-shore,
Or wandered on the ridges to the cliff, —
Brown fields devote to pastures, herdless now,
When sear the grasses, — and a wide domain
Whereon a son of earth, who knew this place,
Might cheer his lungs and taste a cheap delight.

Methinks I knew, or heard, of such a one,
Who sometimes came in winter, when the year
Seemed early flowering; he who first explored
The willow in its island, if the heat
Hid in the dark ditch-bottom did not stir
And silver its spruce catkin, and insist
That late or early she should show her flowers.
Oft musing thus, he visited the lodge
Of the sagacious muskrat building domed,
And noted how the fox, going his rounds
Daily and true as milkman's, came each time
To call at the brown cabin, and inquire
Upon the flesh of the inhabitant.
Too much, he thought, may man conceive himself.
Have these consistent creatures no concerns?
Or must we sink them on that poor excuse,
Replete with sound, called "instinct"? Cheap device
Of close self-seeking, which dares not respire
A loving science, nor may grant the fox
E'en the poor drop of brains he ought to have.

He eats the muskrat, and we name him "wild," —
And what eats man?

Sometimes, perchance, he paused,
Holding mute dialogue with stock and stone;
Nor idly passed the chopper at his tree,
Without demanding what the season wore,
What bird was at its song? if the sap stirred?
And long discussed that puzzling variance
Of maple-bud and willow-bark to know
Whether his eyes, or they, had started first.
From these tough-handed men, with broken nails,
Grimed fingers rich in frost-cracks, and short words,
Clad, like the groves, in bark, he often drew
Useful conclusions. And how much their work
Drives in upon their mind the stores of knowledge
That the small, probing, questionable man,
Who makes the fool of nature, never gets!
And though soft-hearted, and with nervous dread,
Still hearkened to their talk of otters killed,
Stories of snakes, and boat-loads of the muskrat

Slaughtered to-day, and the like crimes of the gun, —
Man being the cruelest murderer.

In March
He traced the warmish wood-depths, glad to explore
The sheltered darlings of the spring, whose leaves,
Earliest unbound in broad veratrum, take
The gazer's eye ; and watched the cowslip's gold
In a forelooking mood ; and heard the bee
Hum in the calla, while the beetle's rings
Drew their white circles on the gleaming sand :
For he could see and trust, — see and delight !
The compensation in his element
Came forth didactic, cousin to the scene,
Still flowering as it should. He, faithful, thus
Unfolded, in propriety, the suits
That his long practising in Nature's court
Had settled with the costs. Sometimes he heard
The partridge in the spring, like a low thunder
Muffled in the wood, swell through the verdures,
And the wood-thrush chant in the green alleys,

Wherein the tough pitch-pine builds her soft bowers.
I think whate'er he found he loved ; kneeling
As some dread worshipper before the shrine,
Wholly desirous to be one with God.
No summer's fire, no winter's blast, nor life
With its unnumbered sorrows for all hearts,
Not that which shuts the door to mortal thought,
Could blot away the fond belief in him,
That even through all Nature he must pass,
So having known her. She would not prove false
To one who loved her, as that poet said,
The eldest of the bards in Keswick's vale,
Who clomb Helvellyn's brow, and loved his rock.
No doubt the knowing critic must have told —
Had there been critics here (a race distract) —
That our delightful wanderer might achieve
More hopeful deeds in cities walled, and marts ;
Yet shall not these crude solitudes permit
At monstrous intervals some special eye
Here interested ?

To these quiet woods,
And to the ponds as still, I frequent came ;
The waters, late so sparkling, now all rest,
Fast in their icy floors till Spring's warm hand
Pass o'er them, and awake their sleeping forms.
A flat and rustic landscape, loosely done ;
Moist bottoms, where the rushes grow ; low fields ;
Swamps built on sphagnum ; most of all,
The shrubby woods, late felled, with brush new-risen ;
Small saplings and thin bushes, where the leaves
Hang mournful all the winter, and lament
The hopelessness of life. No stuccoed piles,
Daubed by remoter ages rich in Time,
That write the history of barbaric deeds,
Tall phantoms of the past, towering to shade
The present, mark these hollow vales ; if aught,
A recent story, where the actors yet
Walk with the living, and omit the date.
But if thus homely be the novel space,
So chimes it better with the fortune plain
Of them that till the dirt, and make its plum

Their pride. They own no high achievement,
They boast no means but as their labor yields.
No pale, hereditary flame gilds here
A crown; no hives of painted lords exalt
O'er the dull bondsman, whose own name is index
Of what were farmers in the olden day, —
"Bond" meaning "farmer."

And for me, the same,
These dells seemed like my fortunes, as the leaves
That strewed the wayside path, and 'neath my feet
Went crackling in the frost, trod under foot,
And by their living kindred left to die
Unknown, uncared for, e'en their own descent
Hating the thought to mingle with the fallen;
Left for the farmer's wagon to crush down,
Or the wild forest-fire to lick in air,
And snatch for good. In these peculiar scenes
I sometimes caught an echo of the past,
Lessons of sunk religions sounding faint:
The race was born to suffer — so shalt thou;

Was born to perish — so must thou, quickly;
And ever swift the changeful seasons walk;
The icy Boreas comes, and nips thy ears;
The furnace of July consumes the earth;
Round runs the year; and soon the years repass
With an indifferent gait.

Doth the wind
Blowing across the pasture, where the bent,
Long frozen to its core, sighs through the ice,
Survey the landscape? care if green or gray?
Or the swift partridge, o'er the withered leaves
Darting like arrows from an archer's bow,
Demand protection of the season's tooth,
Getting his fill of twigs and frozen buds,
And even the dry leaves, — things to his taste?
Or the unenvied crow, who flaps across
The frequent road, purloining light repast,
Quarrel with the north-west breeze, that mocks
His penury, and beats against his wing
With demon fury? Oft in the season

Dreary to the mind, and at its coldest hour,
A feathery drumming from some wood I hear
Of pine, behind my landscape lying far, —
A softly rolling hum, a feathery sob, —
The music of the owl, softest of sounds,
Half-buried in itself, and far beyond
All pathways that I tread, and yet a part,
Truly a fraction of the winter sum,
When every figure counts. So far from man
This sweetest owl, which human speech calls hooting ;
And sometimes in my road I meet a form,
Which all the murderous crew pursue with hounds, —
I mean the slim red fox, his drooping brush
Flitting before me ; and his graceful bounds
Bring back Æsop's tradition of his breed,
Giving the fox the mastery o'er the beasts.
Has sovereign Nature spared her faithful court ?
The poor fox, gaunt to famine, dreads the sun,
And takes his walk at midnight to devour
Some game less wakeful. Nature is so careless !
She projects her race, then leaves it struggling :

New races hatch, and eat away its heart.
Life is at loose ends. Yet mark the titmice, —
Smallest of the tribe, mere specks of feathers,
Bits of painted quill, so delicate, a flaw
From either pole would extirpate the race :
Such little twittering mites contemn the storm.
That wintry moth I never fail to find,
And the hard snows have spiders of their own.
Let any thaw ensue, how green the plants,
That, mid the russet grass, put forth their leaves,
Spreading resigned their verdure ! clovers bright,
And veiny hawkweeds, and soft, drooping ferns ;
And down the brook, the wild cress moving free
Where'er the ice-chink lets the traveller's glance
Peruse the inward pages of the stream.

II.

THE HERMIT.

Ah, me! what brave content pervades the storm!
How the wind whistles, and outdoes the arts
In raising cornices along the wall!
Or when the gray destroyer from the East
Drives up his frozen troops in cutting sleet,
I feel the thankful chant, that, truly here,
"In these flat pastures and prosaic plains,
Life still has joys, because it still has pains."
Then o'er our upland swells, it cheers to roam,
Where the audacious blast chants loud its hymn,
And the insolent squalls roll by, resolved
To force us downward. Soon, once more below
Into the shelter of the groves I sink,
Delighted with the lee. Of these rich joys,
None can defraud us; and I thank the kind,

That, on our fields dim-moving, — life of fear!
Yet seize their spoil of freedom, — chosen times,
When the tormentor, Man, is barred within;
Then, in the revels of the storm-clad powers,
The howling east or the tempestuous south,
They sally forth contented, and become
Lords of the puny land again, itself
Their own.

Somewhat of this and higher laws
Once brought a hermit to the lowly bank
Of one of these poor ponds that glaze our fields,
Where, for a season, he might quaff the wine
Of nature in full piquancy, and thus
Become well satiate with it. Partly for this, —
Because our man kept other crusade high
Beyond all I pursue; strains of mad faith
And thin tradition rocking in his dream
With their distracting creatures, and afloat
Setting good part of all things sane he knew.
Yet in his stupid moments he half loved

The generous Giver that o'erflowed his cup,
And gave his droning talent chance to shoot;
Filled out his sandy life with our stray pond;
Sought him gay color for his sunset walk,
And morning-lights that were not made in vain,
And icy moonlight, life's true portraiture,
And his own dreadful faith, that praised itself.
Here on the shore, where I more often tread
In the cold season, this conformer dug,
And built a scanty lodge to bar the cold;
For even he, much as he loved tradition,
Never could heat his limbs with ritual Bibles,
But struck up a fire.

I loved to mark him,
So true to Nature. In his scanty cabin,
All along the walls, he hid the crevice
With some rustic thought, — a withered grass,
Choice-colored blackberry-vines, and nodding sedge
Fantastically seeded; or the plumes
The golden-rod dries in the fall; and tops

Of lespedeza, brown as the Spanish name ;
And velvet bosses quaintly cut away
Off the compliant birches, of whose trunks
This hermit blest made pillage. Here he sat,
The most contented hermit on the earth,
Full of glad sounds, and full of pleasant thoughts,
Delighted with the village and the pond,
And with himself, the darling of the whole.

Aside from all the jaundice he had caught
From the seducing past, I think he dwelt
As near to nature's heart as most who breathe ;
Nor robust woodman, and the sallow tribe
Of dreaming poets or thin writing folk,
Enjoy more comfort in their lonely life.
True, the traditions of the race still ticked
Like spiders in the web, shut in his ears ;
And still he heard that drumming in his dreams,
And schemed reforms to agitate the earth
With penny wisdom, and insure the peace.
Yet oft he fed the titmice from his hand ;

And the old, cautious muskrat, who, behind
This hermit's hut, had built himself a house,
Felt no alarm at him who daily left
An alms at his back-door, and kept the faith.
When the short winter-days ran rapid out,
If clear the air, he heard the small pond sing
Its well-known strains of pleasure and of praise,
As on the strings of an Æolian lyre ;
And saw the sentry pines that fringe the east
Erect their emerald tips along the eve,
While all the singular fibres of the pond
Kept on their whining music.

In those times,
Rarely there passed his door some of those friends
That here survive the downfall of their strength, —
The old inhabitants, the moles and mice ;
Perchance upon his roof scenting the stores
Of frugal wheat and corn there left to cool, —
Grains that he ground united, for himself,
In a spent mill, upon his theory,

(For surely he had such a thing, and kept
A theory, on which he lived and moved
And had his being,) slept and sang and piped.
Why should he not? Have we not all some such,
Howe'er we strive to hate it? — a bequest
Of lean tradition from dead yesterdays,
Less wise than this good soul's. Dearly he prized
The hungry winter-nights, when owlets sang,
And pale above the moon careered in heaven,
To such as he a phantom of delight!
And when he heard the frost crack in the tree,
Fancying some ghostly fabled beast come forth
To mock at nature's patience and reserve,
This hermit bawled such ballads to the stars,
The wintry fields, and all the depth of snow,
And that cold, staring moon, that nature's self
Came out to hear his cry, and sat half pleased.

Not always went he lonely; for his thought
Retained the touch of one whose guest he was, —
A large and generous man, who, on our moors

Having built up his thought (though with an Indian
tongue,
And fittest to have sung at Persian feasts,
Or been the prince of Afric, or the lord
Of all the genii in the Arab chant),
Still dwelt among us as the sage he was ;
Sage of his days, patient and proudly true,
Whose word was worth the world, whose heart was
pure,
Type of our best ancestrals, English blood
Drawn down in generous measures from the race
Whom Sidney, Milton, and the others knew,
The pious Herbert with the saintly Vaughan,
And splendid Shakspeare, playing Nature's game.
Oh, such a heart was his ! no gate or bar :
The poorest wretch that ever passed his door
Welcome as highest king or fairest friend
To all his store, and to the world beside.
And in his tent sometime our hermit sat,
Listening discourse most welcome from the dame
Rarest in shooting darts of wit and love,
Such as most hermits prize.

This English man
(Seldom the hermit's guest) of whom I spake
Could much admire the skill from which he drew
With his small sources those adornments rare,
His curious emblems, — as a blue-jay's wing
Found on my path, a votive from the skies ;
Or with the pensile cranberry redly-bright,
Or the less frequent yew's delightful fruit,
Whose coral drops surpass the lustrous blush
Of Southern rubies. Surely this hermit
In his plain-kept hut shaped out a mystery
Deserving of repute, noting his means, —
Mere straws or stems, some o'erspent Johnswort
flowers,
And quaint anomaly of pitch-pine cones,

But how could him that hermit quite content,
Creature of custom ? Such the spell of love !
A loving heart supplies the occasion ripe.
For if the genius of all learning flamed
Aloft in those pure eyes : if never hour,

Nor e'en the smallest instance of his times,
Could ever flit, nor give that soul reward;
Yet in his sweet relations with his race
Pure mercy lived. He held his noble wealth
For others, as a pearl of rare device,
If set to enterprise in scholar's tasks,
And so less imminent to common life.
But, oh! his goodliness, as that hermit knew:
The merest waif from nothing cast upon
The shores of this rich heart became a gem,
So regal then its setting. I have marked
The silliest apes, the fops of fashion, stand
And think themselves lord arbiters of fate,
Raised by the polished methods of this soul
To rarer problems than their half-done brains
E'er doubted; seen the choughs and cuckoos swell
To bursting, and march off, immoderate.

MOUNTAIN.

III.

THE MOUNTAIN.

At times, the hermit and myself forsook
The narrow boundary of that small place ;
And nothing being left of novel there,
If ever was such element, we roamed
Afar the rocky upland, seeking new
And wilder pastures to contemplate near,
Thinking that thus might come a change of thought, —
Perhaps to me ; for in the hermit's faith,
Thought, like the pumpkin, yielded but a rind.
Wearily he drew his scanty members
O'er the snow-clad ground, in theory as stout
As him fed up on grossness, and more weak,
In my poor estimate, than some slim boy's.
Far we tramped, dragging along the snow,
Through which for very joy I sometime danced

At living still, and knowing one alive ;
At which he laughed, to watch me skipping there,
With but a partial looseness in my joints.
Wide pastures, petty woodland, passing soon,
The little cottage where he dwells we reached
Who in great contemplation moulders life,
Or guesses that he does, — one framed to be
Saint of some feverish nation tumbling down
In hot Mahomet's pages, or like Jove,
On that Homeric fable rubbed so bright.

For in the dusty muddle of the time,
When learning goes for nothing, or much less,
He who knows not now triumphs o'er who knows,
And has more glowing honors than a prince.
Who, like the Titans might embroil the skies,
Wears rusty black, and mourns a threadbare seam, —
Him did our hermit love. In him he found
An eremite indeed, a true reformer
Cudgelled from the tomb, — Jerome or Augustine,
Longest breathed of all seraphic writers,

Whose vast tomes, heaps of indifference,
Might furnish forth whole libraries for them,
Who, in these octave days, pop out their books.
There, in his tiny cottage, with no art,
Nor graced with aught but the sublime intent,
Patronus sat upon his learned throne.
He ruled a library, a saint's true prize,
Its covers hanging awkward as the thought,
Done with self-knowledge, cheapest property.
Once as we looked from that divine abode
On those sad mountains shining on the west,
Blue as philosophy, and as far off,
We asked our Mentor if his learned eye,
Drawn outward, had been raised to Nature's height,
Whether he filled the prospect with himself,
Or was himself the creature of the scene.
But you could ask this creature all day long
A hundred questions, and renew the quest.
Reminded thus of those aerial heights,
And nothing doubting, to that point I bent,
I, with the hermit; and once there we sat

On the ascending slope in festive mood,
Across the valleys gazing on dim heights,
And looking in the valleys for a place
To which I fancy I might once pertain.
Strange, a few cubits raised above the plain,
And a few tables of resistless stone
Spread round us, with that rich, delightful air,
Draping high altars in cerulean space,
Could thus enchant the being that we are! —
Those altars, where the airy element
Flows o'er in new perfection, and reveals
Its constant lapsing (never stillness all),
As a mother's kiss touching the bright spruce-
foliage;
And in her wise distilment the soft rain,
Trickling below the sphagnum that o'erlays
The plateau's slope, is led to the ravine,
And so electrified by her pure breath,
As if in truth the living water famed,
Recorded in John's mythus, who first dashed
Ideal baptism upon Jordan's shore,

Where doomed Tiberias o'er Gennesareth,
Burns up her smoking columns to the sky,
From Thermæ famed, — dead as her Herod now.

In this sweet solitude, the Mountain's life,
At morn and eve, at rise and hush of day,
I heard the wood-thrush sing in the white spruce,
The living water, the enchanted air
So mingling in the crystal clearness there,
A sweet peculiar grace from both, — this song,
Voice of the lovely mountain's favorite bird !
These steeps inviolate by human art,
Centre of awe, raised over all that man
Would fain enjoy and consecrate to one,
Lord of the desert and of all beside,
Consorting with the cloud, the echoing storm,
When like a myriad bowls the mountain wakes
In all its alleys one responsive roar ;
And sheeted down the precipice, all light,
Tumble the momentary cataracts, —
The sudden laughter of the mountain-child !

Here haunts the sage of whom I sometime spake, —
Ample Fortunio. On the mountain-peak
I marked him once, at sunset, where he mused,
Forth looking on the continent of hills ;
While from his feet the five long granite spurs
That bind the centre to the valley's side
(The spokes from this strange middle to the wheel)
Stretched in the fitful torrent of the gale,
Bleached on the terraces of leaden cloud
And passages of light, — Sierras long
In archipelagoes of mountain sky,
Where it went wandering all the livelong year.
He spoke not ; yet methought I heard him say,
" All day and night the same ; in sun or shade,
In summer flames and the jagged biting knife
That hardy winter splits upon the cliff, —
From earliest time the same. One mother
And one father brought us forth, thus gazing
On the summits of the days, nor wearied
Yet if all your generations fade :
The crystal air, the hurrying light, the night,

Always the day that never seems to end,
Always the night whose day does never set ;
One harvest and one reaper, ne'er too ripe,
Sown by the self-preserver, free from mould,
And builded in these granaries of heaven,
This ever living purity of air,
In these perpetual centres of repose
Still softly rocked."

I looked ; but he was gone.
I saw his robe gleam on the clean-cut stone ;
Nor did I doubt he trod the downward path,
Where we had raised, with competent ado,
That vernal mansion sometimes named in sport
The True Observatory, so to stay
The unversed footstep from these mocking paths.
We found him in the camp (I mean Fortunio) ;
His foot as fleet to scale those pinnacles
As the wild chamois and the Switzer Tell,
Who in the breast of tyrants smote his shaft.
He then resumed his singing, or I dreamed :

Upon the mountain's side no hour is vain,
No fatal thought e'er passes through the mind.
Low in the valley hangs the village church;
I note the tavern with its rusted sign
Creak in the blast, and hear the drover's voice
As on he sweeps his herd, wild as his bulls,
From the pastures high returning: there, below
The cottage lamp gleams forth, ere on the hill
Our daylight flits, or the first tearful stars
Have dallied o'er Wachusett: the hind comes
Home to the evening meal, his children round;
And the coarse village cur, dozing all day,
Essays to hoarsely wheeze largest response
To his adhesive neighbors. On the height,
Diminished thus in distance to mere specks,
I view the fear, the fortune, and the fate
Of that same mortal race chanted in song.
And while the eagles, soaring o'er the peak,
By their shrill echoing whistles fright the hare
Bounding along the naked mountain-side,
And the grave porcupine his shuffling quills

Marches along the ledges black as Ind,
I mark the starry host assert their reign,
Or muse on Nature's income, or my own.
Was there a time when these half-answering hills
Lay at the frown of an ambitious sea,
Grinding along with its cold worlds of ice,
Till, all the furrowed surface deeply carved,
The saline torment took its hand away,
And left a course of splinters in dry air,
To mock the baffled thinker of an orb,
Where somewhat thinks superior to himself.
Oh! what a day, and night of days, swept by,
As, slowly o'er the gray unmoving hills,
In endless march deployed the polar host!
Oh! what an hour when that sea-tossing mass
Began to cut the coast-lines, and map out
The rays of a few continents, and drop
Their bowlders in the path!

Why ask, refused,
Why solitary in the clear expanse

The ceaseless tragedies revolve forlorn?
Nor showman's *bâton*, nor responsive shout
Of all the tribe who make this peak their friend
For a few hurried hours, disturbs the dream.
They speak of questions answered in the deep,
As if these curious carvings were but flung
Aside, like mason's chippings from his blocks,
And left to fill the rut of Nature's road.
They stand forever silent in themselves,
(Whether interior instincts dwell in such,
So speechless, or some deeper cause presides,
Barring out human nature from the ken
Of these presumed concealments,) and disposed
Rather to end, and make no sign, than speak.
Amen! by this neither we lose or gain;
The phantoms of a morn whose blinking sun
Shoots swift combustion, or prefaces death,
And whate'er more, the preface to a tale.

Fair on the hillside as beseemed the state,
Of small spruce-boughs supported by the ash,

Whose crimson berries in September's sun
Lay sparkling jewels o'er the mountain's breast,
There, in a native cot with three stone walls,
I had built out a sort of summer-house,
(As much to nature's trickery owing
As my own); and viewed beneath the lowlands;
The little hamlets with their shining roofs,
When burning noontide fell plumb from the sky;
The flicker of the tapers from the night;
And clouding lakes and woods, all still, unless,
Like battle's brunt, I heard the quarries boom
In far Fitzwilliam, where the granite ledge
Hurls forth its masses for the griping town,
Or the far train sighing in lonely fear;
And never ceased to feel a certain power
That o'er me ruled, uplifted in the height
Of all the crystal sky and perfect air,
Where, but the breath of man were such a thing,
I might have thought vitality a crown.

And here the hermit sat, and told his beads,

And stroked his flowing locks, red as the fire,
Summed up his tale of moon and sun and star:
"How blest are we," he deemed, "who so comprise
The essence of the whole, and of ourselves,
As in a Venice flask of lucent shape,
Ornate of gilt Arabic, and inscribed
With Suras from Time's Koran, live and pray,
More than half grateful for the glittering prize,
Human existence! If I note my powers,
So poor and frail a toy, the insect's prey,
Itched by a berry, festered by a plum,
The very air infecting my thin frame
With its malarial trick, whom every day
Rushes upon and hustles to the grave,
Yet raised, by the great love that broods o'er all
Responsive, to a height beyond all thought!"

He ended, as the nightly prayer and fast
Summoned him inward. But I sat and heard
The night-hawks rip the air above my head,
Till midnight o'er the warm dry, dewless rocks;

And saw the blazing dog-star droop his fire,
And the low comet, trailing to the south,
Bend his reverted gaze, and leave us free.
At times I sat in July's fiercest ray,
Until the solid heat had fairly flayed
Me in her crucible, and the small cisterns,
Where the good mother kept my royal purl,
Had gone to air. Each night renews the waste;
And still each morn the cold pellucid bath
With faith revives the fainting soul, and forth
I step elate upon my chosen path,
Snatching the dewy fragrance of the hour.
Then in the happy sunlight, and the first
Of all those endless hours we name July,
What chosen beauty gleams among the copse
While each lovely tree welcomes its snow-bird;
This his summer-home: his graceful trill,
Perpetually fresh, delights the ear
From spruce to spruce, and the quick glimmering
Of his slaty tail (snow-white its circle)
Sends out most cheerful omens to the eye.

"Here let us live and spend away our lives,"
Said once Fortunio, "while below, absorbed,
The riotous, careering race of man,
Intent on gain or war, pour out their news.
Let us bring in a chosen company,
Like that the noblest of our beauteous maids
Might lead, — unequalled Margaret! herself
The summary of good for all our state;
Composedly thoughtful, genial, yet reserved,
Pure as the wells that dot the ravine's bed,
And lofty as the stars that pierce her skies.
Here shall she reign triumphant, and preside
With gentle prudence o'er the camp's wild mood,
Summoning forth much order from what else
Surely must prove unsound."

Here in the blast,
Drawn from the ranges of our westering hills,
That like far meadows strewn with haycocks lie,
Cool as most well-iced wine, erect the blaze,
Fruit of Herculean labor from the strength

Of one whose hand serves him for others' needs
(No thought of self e'er soils his manly glove),
Blaze of no dry or fitful accident,
The toy of wintry frolic on these slopes,
White as a grandsire's locks ; but of green spruce,
Tough and substantial as her granite roots,
And with strong lights painting the ravine's face,
Or Tintoretto's reds and Rembrandt's shade,
And some fine impulse for our human eyes.
Here let us list the descant bravely raised,
Hymn for the Kaiser, or that seashore lay
Sung on the strand, though inland in its theme ;
O Rolling River! boldly may it swell,
Till the dear creatures on the dark low plain
Catch the sweet strain of music, taught by art
Of distance, to unfold the lenient melody ;
And the loud-blazing torches of birch-bark
Repeat the Indian's war-dance to the cliffs!
Nor let us pass the Spirit of the hills,
One whom no July's blaze has faintly tanned,
No fierce, precipitous slide ever deters

From leaping gladdened down the fearful pass,
His Alpine tira-lira echoing sweet,
And lion curls far sweeping in the blast.
To him such solitudes have been a prayer,
A fount of inspiration, and his hopes,
Whene'er the problem rises, such as youth
From out the store of green expectancy
Brings musing. Then swift he braved the peaks,
Folded his arms, and in the wayward blast,
Tearing the thoughts to ribbons, he would stand,
Composed as silence in the inward heart
Of all the rocking tumult, inly blest.
And now the blaze, uplifting in the breeze,
Shows the mute figures, such as not by art,
To better Gypsy camp, might be improved.
There serious listeners, those undaunted maids,
Vigorous and swift as the lithe Indian girls,
Who in the natural ages sought our rocks,
Lured by tradition to the grotto's gloom,
Or stung by love, here ventured to the taste
Of the cold precipice, and dashed in scorn

Their pulsing hearts on silence and the waste. —
Alertly swift they mount in earliest dawn
The dim Sierra's point, and Persian there,
(Like Oromazdi's tribe or Mexic priest,)
Wait the approaching day on those cold heights,
Clear as the early hour and with the hues
Of blushing morn caught on their Indian cheeks.
Sometimes I see them, standing silent, grace
The rounded rock like statues framed by art,
For worship in these deserts ; sometimes hear
Their vigilant step, quick speeding home
To raise the fragrant steam, excite the urn,
Or, drawn from India's shore, the gleaming rice
Responsive boil. Oh ! with much patience,
With superior views they frequent strive,
As the cool western breeze, courteously devout,
Salutes the other cheek, and with soft grace
Confers his smoky offering to the orb
Of the delighted worshipper of pan and pot,
Who by her tears proves how sincerely strong
May be a spruce's blessing.

I might deem
That rarely yet had royal hall more seat,
Richer supply of furniture produced,
Rococo or inlaid, and what more light
The Renaissance supplied. The tables, rock;
The chairs carved of the like; and so the floor,
For matutinal or vespernal rite.
And truly nobler ceiling was not framed
Than all that dome of heaven above our heads,
Dappling afar the lazy afternoons
O'er twice a hundred valleys; or, intent
To march upon our banquet, seven wild showers
In misty columns making for the plates.
And much supply of couches spread along.
Behold the mountain's floor! protend your robe
Caoutchouc's glory and the woolly friend,
And lumped therein secure, fast on your rock,
In some sharp crevice where the cornel paints
Immenser scarlet and more smashing reds
Than gorgeous Turner's palette, drop thy bones;
Soothed by the spruces murmuring in thy ear,

The ever-rising, ever-falling sigh
Of the perpetual air, and with the night,
Reserved companion, cool and sparsely clad,
Dream, till the threefold hour, with lowly voice,
Steals whispering in thy frame, "Rise, valiant youth!
The dawn draws on apace, envious of thee,
And polar in his gait: advance thy limbs,
Nor strive to heat the stones."

When August suits,
Some hasten to their haunts, and steal away
The berries blue as heaven that paint the sod
In chosen districts, sweetly edible,
As grape from torrid Spain that commerce wafts,
Or famed Sumatra's fruit, or Cuban pine,
Or where the guava shakes its purple sides,
Glory of camps! Nor let us fail to glean
Proud store of mountain cranberries (more tart
And spicy tasted them the learned deem
Than lowland species), while the faithful maid
Oft stirs the ruddy conserve, nor permits

(Child of inconstancy) the mess to burn.
This task to Madeline was frequent given.
Slight as the daisy bowing in the wind,
She owned a genial grace to charm, persuade,
With copious reasonings on didactic things,
Filled from the springs of genius like a sea,
And touching on the beach of human life
And its smooth pebbles, as a glittering spray,
A fairy music soft as eventide.

Thrice I essayed afar that eastern spur
Where the rude torrents of primeval rock,
Stripped from their canvas, toss in grandeur vast,
A pile tremendous, where four Doric shafts,
Upreared in chaos, front the eager sky,
Graced with an architrave, so that no art
Could more sublime their glory. Wandering here
Once with the hermit, I essayed to speak
Of that conclusive figure on the arch
Of this small temple, carved by nature's rule, —
Things of some prime existence ere our race

Had cast the hammer, and with meted lines
Traced out the right proportions of the form ;
Long ere the Parthenon on the Athenian mound
Constrained the view of him, who from the isles
Cycladean, swift from pirate's prow, flushes
His mainsail till old Sunium's past ;
And next we skirted that supinest swamp,
Flowered with the pure white bolls of cotton-grass,
Where the decaying frames of the old trees
(I scarcely know how sprouting from the rocks,
Home of the wildcat, and the panther's house)
Lay prostrate : wrecks of the fiery storm,
That swept away their groves, and, vanquished, cast
To dry and whiten on the careless stones
Beneath the unheeding sky. Then eastward,
As I yet pursued that way, last coming
To the sheer untrammelled precipice that hangs
Forever wall against the small romance, —
The steading small, the little human nook
With its three speaking roofs, some pastoral smoke
Soft issuing from those hearths, a token glad

Sent to the laughing children leaving school,
And the tanned ploughman as he homeward stalks
Ached to the bone, and ragged as the wolf
That preys upon his vitals ; soothed he sees.
Poised in my airy pinnacle, I paint
(The darting swallow whirring swiftly by)
At dizzy depths, far in the valley's womb,
The zigzag coil of alders, a black thread,
The serpentine progression of the Stream
That plays its rival flute-notes all the year ;
See the herds feeding on the tiresome hills,
Enormous to the herdsman, and to me
As flat and motionless as I to him
Obliterate ; and in truth, how sweet,
And never half as sweet the human thought!
Then wished I for some chat with roguish lad,
Or idle gossip fresh from parlors full
Of sewing charities, where ladies meet
And thread the needle, but employ the ear ;
E'en the dry call of herd-boy to his cows,
His endless *goaf*, reiterate o'er the fields ;

Or the white phantom of an ancient maid
Doing its shopping on a pistareen ;
Or the lame parson's sulky, time-worn trap,
Sahara's sermon creaking in the wheel.

In this upraised seclusion from the race
Which holds the mirror to the earnest soul,
And bids it scan itself, and set its rate,
How rapid fly our self-conceits afar !
There in the sole unspeaking life of things,
Only the sky for answer, or the rocks
Stretched out beneath, and seeming clouds asleep ;
And the bright spruces that engross the eye
Along the sharp horizon, and content,
So fine and lovely their pathetic grace :
Set in the rocks, apart and sweet and lone,
Like some chaste maid who still attracts us on ;
The twittering snow-bird and the red chewink,
All voices for that place, and man so far !
Then search we out the mazy village-roads,
Stealing from town to town, a sweet response

Greeting our hearts where human feet have trod ;
And village spire, and gleams of pine-clad lake,
And rippling river playful in the sun,
A glance of human sunshine on the shore
Where labor pulsates ; all these signs, and more,
That earth, from this divorce. Oh ! far apart,
Then, when the dying orb behind the range,
Gilds the Sierra, and on this, the night
Thrown from his Alpine shoulders, fills our souls.

IV.

HENRY'S CAMP.

And once we built our fortress where you see
Yon group of spruce-trees sidewise on the line
Where the horizon to the eastward bounds, —
A point selected by sagacious art,
Where all at once we viewed the Vermont hills,
And the long outlines of the mountain-ridge,
Ever renewing, changeful every hour ;
And, sunk below us in that lowland world,
The lone Farm-steading where the bleaching cloth,
Small spot of white, lay out upon the lawn ;
Behind, smooth walls of rock, and trees each side,
Sifting the blast two ways ; and on the south
Our wigwam opened, showing in its length
That flattened hay-stack or repeated hill, —
Wachusett !

Hither, not often wandered
From the vale a sportive lad, whose lessons
Rightly learned, and brought from out-door science,
Still desired the growths of nature, new or old;
Forever in review his choosing thought
Purely might sit; and so as one, the two,
Himself and Nature, truly linked might know.
So strangely was the general current mixed
With his vexed native blood in its crank wit,
That, as a mirror, shone the common world
To this observing youth, whom noting, thence
I called Idolon: ever firm to mark
Swiftly reflected in himself the Whole,
As if in truth he had been rather that
Than what he was, — a mortal as ourselves.
His ever-bubbling wit broke on the sides
Of that small plateau; and the gray rocks smiled,
And all the listening host sent up their crow.
At times, I guessed the giant porcupine,
With his black quill dropping upon my brain,
Or biting on the ledges in the glen;

And sometimes fancied, as the theme became
More cynic, that the bear, lurking below,
Had scaled deep Purgatory and crawled out
To hear the sport, or sharpen up his claw;
So radiant was his talk. Much did he know
The face of all the hills, and stopped to read
Lecidea's black or green parmelia's fruit,
And the round shields that lobe the olive cliffs,
(Tripe of the rock and Muhlenbergian styled),
Or alpine heaths, and where the mosses grew
Most complex in their teeth, and gracious ferns,
Or jungermannia, rich in purple fronds,
Painting the trunks with its delicious tint.
Each hour this laughing boy tenacious caught
A fist full of existence, spread it out
Flat on its back, and dried it in the sun
Of all his breezy thoughts to shape its truth.
Intent to know what meant the outward life
To an unwearied searcher, never slack,
Yet fixed within it all, himself he saw,
Shooting his arrows into all that crowd

Of unaspiring objects, quite engaged
Simply in carrying on their general trade ;
Whereat Dame Nature smiled to see her boy.
Oh ! let him search in nature, — he who loves
An individual life, prepared to be
The mirror by his notions, if he may ;
Yet not too boastful fancy that the kings
Who rule this lower world will stoop their crowns.
Yet the craving soul asks curious questions ;
And it asks far more for its usurping pride
Than seats in speechless corners to tell beads.
Thus slumbered not Idolon ; ere the day
Had broke the ebon shell, or stretched her pink
Upon the auroral curtains, he set forth,
Making as if the shepherd of the dawn
To drive his scattered flocks, and sum the tale ;
In a self-comfortable pride resolved
To equalize things mundane. Much he sought
The limit of the exact. He testified
By painful art how much his world produced,
Precisely how he stood with every fact

Wherein co-adjutor with Nature's truth:
So of the mountains he would draw the map,
And thus, by circumambient tape
Deduce the just extent of those vague rocks,
What spire was that, and how yon lowland's name;
To some, such searches in the intricate
A cold vacuity sliding and cheap:
Such scorn the petty, harnessed to the vast,
And pray for wings, and sure release from time.

Not far below our tent an Indian camp
All softly spread its shelter in the glen
Where the old mountain-road circuits the gulf:
Three wigwams here they held; and one old man,
The hunter of the tribe, whose furrowed brow
Had felt the snow of sixty winters' fall,
At eve would mess with us, and smoke the pipe
Of peace before our cabin. He gave voice
To many a story of the past, else dim, —
Things he had done in youth, or heard them told,
And legends of religion, such as they

Who live in forests and in hardships tell.
One day Idolon said, musing of him,
" As there's no plant or bird from foreign shores
That just resembles ours, so, behind us,
Figures transported off an ancient cast, —
The Indian comes, and just as far from us.
I never dream how wildness fled from man
Among those Arab deserts, and how Greece
Fetched from the Lycian seacoast her tame myths,
Or why that fiery shore, Phœnicia's pride,
Should be so civil in her earliest creed.
But on our wild man, like this Sagamore,
Nature bestows her truthful qualities, —
Fleet on the war-path, fatal in his aim,
More versed in each small track that lightly prints
Some wandering creature, than the thing itself,
And wreathed about with festoons of odd faiths,
By which each action holds a votive power.
He hears the threatening wood-god in the wind,
That, hollow-sounding, fills his breast with fear ;
His eye, forelooking as the night unrolls

The forked serpents darting on the cloud,
Sees all the great procession of his saints ;
And, while the gloom rolls out the thunder's peal,
Listens the voices of his god command.
Truly the evil spirit much he fears,
Believing, as he drains the calabash,
Or solemn fills the calumet's red bowl
With Kinni-Kinnek, that a god of love
Will not produce for him much fatal loss
To be considered. When the lightning came
And snapt the crested rock whereon he played
With all his Indian boys, he felt the bolt
Crash through his heart, and knelt before the power.
Thus with the careful savage culture fares
As the event looks forth. He does not preach
And pray, or tune of violin the string,
And celebrate the mercies of the Lord,
But flings in his fire the fish-bones, lest the fish,
Whose spirits walk abroad, detect the thief,
And ne'er permit the tribe a nibble more :
So, in the bear-feast, they are firmly bound

To swallow absolutely all that hangs
Appended, cooked or raw, about the game,
Lest he, the figment of the bear, should rise,
And thence no drop of medicable grease
The Indian coat should show, nor poll of squaw
Shine like a panel with protrusive oil.
They thus insure the state, and give the fiend,
The evil one, due homage, — pay the cash ;
And the tribe say, 'What will the good god do?
Alack! the evil one is full of wile,
And black and crafty as our Indian selves ;
Far better for us to keep peace with him.'

"A catalogue of woe the Indian's fate,
Drawn by the holy Puritan, and all
For his divine religion. Thence the names
Fixed to the aborigines, sweet titles, —
Cruel, fiendish, brute, and deeds to match,
At which the earth must rise. The Indian maids,
Oh, lovely are their forms! No cultured grace
Superior breeding, finer taste has shown ;

And tints of color in their modest cheeks
Shaming Parisian beauty with its glow.
And the young hunter, or the agile boys,
As that plain artist claimed who named the first
The Belvidere (of all the statues known to art),
Sunbright Apollo, a young Mohawk chief.
Alas! the race, possessors of these hills,
Would not at once desert their hunting-grounds,
Loved by the Pilgrim, — martyred to the cent!"

Thus could Idolon image his red race,
While o'er our heads the night-hawks darting swarm
(On sharded wing the unwary beetle
Like Indians to the godly, falling in),
Ripped through the empty space, and the young stars, —
The glittering Pleiades and Orion's crest,
Or she who holds the chair, Cassiopeia,
Or swift Boötes driving from the north,
And the red flame of war, the torrid Mars —
Oft added to our strange society
On those religious nights when all the air

That lingered on the rocks was fragrant with a flower
Not of that lowland kind. Then flit abroad
Dim figures on the solitary stones.
Almost I see the figure of my friend
Scaling the height, or running o'er the slabs ;
I hear his call for which I listened long ;
His fresh response, as swift I shouted back,
Echoes in the space ; see his light form
Bound o'er the dark crevasse, or thread the slide
Where never from the year deserts the ice.
Stay ! 'twas a shadow fluttering off the past,
A multiplex of dreams that kindled thus ;
And, if near eve, the circle of small lakes,
Around the Mountain's foot securely drawn,
Like smoothest mirrors sent me back the world
Caught from their cheerful shores ; and, slow revealed,
Came forth new lakes, or even seemed
A river in one path, — I thought I heard
My old companion's voice, who in his heart
Did treasure all their joys !

And great those days,
And splendid on the hills, when the wild winds
Forever sweep the cloud, at once re-formed
From off the plateau's slope; and at a breath
Uplift the sunlit valleys sweet with morn,
The hamlet's homely Grange, the dappling shades
Thrown from the sultry clouds that sail its heaven;
And in a second instant, the wild mist
Instantly obscure, the valley vanishes,
Gone as a flitting vision from the skies,
And by our camp the spruce in brightest green
Laughs at our brigand jackets shining wet.
And night, that eateth up substantial things,
Leads us strange dances o'er the chopping shelves,
Down bosky slide and gravitating cliff,
Where we go plunging madly for our lives,
All safe divisions, paths, and tracks foregone;
And balances we strike, and learn the rule,
That downward motion soon appears reversed.

At times, the hour admitted of debate, —
High topics breaking on the rocky fells
Of Church or State, and how devised their metes,
Whether such bounds are sure, or will not sway
For each superior soul. And once of love,
That subject of burlesque. "I," said Miranda,
Goddess of an isle that sleeps in Grecian seas, —
"I crave a real passion, not a ghost
Dancing about o'er airy vacancies.
May I meet human sympathies not less
Demanding lively truth of me than I
Of them! For who can fence and gesture here
In this swift-moving world, and cast away
Precarious fortune on a thin-spun web
Of blank deception, blowing in the air?
May be that saints and lovers stupefy
Themselves and others with a threadbare dream,
Like famous Dante, that translated great,
To whom poor Beatricé was a myth,
As to his last translator, gaping still.
Ideal love, my friends, do you desire?

Write some congenial sonnets to the moon,
As Sidney did, or spend your soul on one
Whose face you never saw and only guessed."

To her, who sometime spake as full of jest,
Replied a doctor of less lovely sex:
"In that ideal love I see the life
Of a confiding soul destined to soar
Beyond the vain realities he flies,
And, by his deep affection purified,
Become like Dante in a far-off dream,
Worshipping forever a superior soul.
Shall not that star to which I distant tend,
Pure in its crystalline seclusion set
To be an altar of the constant truth, —
Shall not that being, ever to my heart
Utterly sacred, some small grace impart?
Raise my dejected fortunes sunk so low?
And as I see the sunset from the peak,
Before me far the ever-reaching chains
Figured by their blue valleys thrown between,

And raised above to purer skies sublime, —
As the last beams of day o'erpass the scene,
I still forever feel the saint I love,
Never by me to be approached more near ;
A distant vision lighting up my soul,
Like Helen to her lover on the heights,
And Beatricé shining through the cloud."

SEA.

V.

THE ISLAND.

Dreaming the sea the elder, I must search
In her for tidings of the olden days, —
Oldest and newest. For how fresh the breeze
That blows along the beaches! and the cry
Of the small glancing bird who runs before,
And still before me, as I find my way
Along the salt sea's ooze, seems like the frail
Admonitor of all the birds: and mark,
Forever turning, that green-crested wave,
Curve of the gleaming billows, and the weed
Purple and green and glistering, the long kelp
Swaying for ages towards the foaming strand;
For here the world is endless. On the marge
I sit of that small Island in the bay,
As an observatory anchored there,

And view the shores receding, where afar
The long sand-beach pursues his lonely way.
Sweet the scene adorned with early sunrise,
Or when a golden hour lifts the faint mist
Of the retreating dawn, and half reveals
The far green hillsides, or the scattered town,
And bits of lovely wood, a moment seen,
Like beauty smiling in her curtained couch.
And then we turn, and meet the curling swell
Roll crashing o'er his sands, — unending Surge,
Voice of another life in worlds how far!

Even like the sea himself, torn down the past,
That wrecker shows, Antonio, an old man,
Patched and repainted like his time-worn craft,
An odd tarpaulin o'er his wild gray locks,
And ever in his hand his wrecking-hook.
Cold as the strand whereon he walks he seems;
His eyes put out with gazing on the deep,
Together with the wear of seventy years,
And scanty food, chill breezes, and the spray

Running their courses in his life. Nor less
The ocean is his friend ; that mystery
Still stranger as he studies it the more.
With tempests often striking o'er his path
Linked to the wrecker's eyes with the far heaven,
Upon whose omens patiently he pores,
And dreams of crashing decks or corpses pale
Washing alone Time's melancholy shore :
Thus are they filled with wisdom who compute
The sea as their companion. Books to them
Are the faint dreams of students, save that one, —
The battered Almanac, — split to the core,
Fly-blown, and tattered, that above the fire
Devoted smokes, and furnishes the fates,
And perigees and apogees of moons.
Despite the rolling temper of the main,
He knows by sternest laws the tide revolves,
And mows his marsh disdainful of the flood :
Held by firm rules, old ocean shall obey,
Indifferently fatal, friend or foe.
Her things so new, her creatures so unlike

All which the dull unmoving shore concerns,
Amid her briny passion pledged to be
Sailors unsocial, darlings of the sea.

How smooth the seal's complexion! finely haired
To shed the searching moisture as if oiled,
Like brave Mahomet's, that unhappy sheik;
Awfully human, the seal's bearded face
Lifts in the cold green current. On the tide
That rakes the channel, there he bolts his horse;
Then stretches off his bulk on the black rocks,
Spread on the seaweed with his heated pile;
Or on the polar cake, politely warm,
Expires his fat. Nor scorn the coots that take
Cold-water treatment, riding on the surf
That combing breaks now spilt upon the sand;
All swimming as one coot from pole to pole.
Nor scare the little beach-birds, dainty thing
Mounted on stilts above the long sea-sands,
Skipping and piping by the whirling tide;
And one, neatest of all, the peep, whose nes.

In the remote recesses of the north
That bird constructs, scarcely by Brewer robbed.
A manless thing, a creature with no heart
For human prayers, the cold unfeeling brine.
That tale survives all annals of the past, —
Of an old-fashioned flood, when earliest boat,
An ark, was fairly launched, victualled and stocked,
With patriarch Noah and his constant dove.
Chinese or Persian, old or newly made,
In all the creature's legends I may hear
The same relation, the same flabby tale.
'Tis Ocean's independence. "Launch your ark;
Get out the long-boat; tow a raft astern,"
Cries Ocean to her sons; "for sure am I
I cannot oil your coats, nor stamp your seals."
And man obeys, and in cork-jackets swims.
They dam the restless beach, they stone and pile.
Alack! the sea pours on its flood the same,
Turning us back, and bowing its regret.

Where the Ægean on its cerule wave
Bore forth the Grecian fleets, what green parade

Was that, to populate the sea with gods,
And tossing heroes, who the mortal state
Had raised diviner! There in peace they rolled, –
Tridental Neptune and his spouting team,
Tritonia, and the Nereids cool
Taking perpetual baths, and who the first,
(Above description) from the sea spumed forth, —
Idalian Venus, on her pink conch-shell,
Smoothing the lovely wave, and throwing smiles
Over the laughing billows. But to-day
To the depths descend the gods of ocean,
When mackerel fishers ride the hollow main,
And in the room of Phosphor, worship gold.
Honest Herodotus who marched afar
O'er Egypt's sands and Babylonia's fall,
Telling strange stories of the deaths of kings,
Gives out that Homer made the gods for men,
Some few short centuries before his time.
How vivid the Greek fancy took the sea!
Making the grave of waters yield its dead,
And in its splendid figures live and burn.

Afar upon the sky the unmoving ship
Stands leaning, her place unchanged, still leaning ;
And so she stands until below the line
Of that lone horizon she silent falls ;
And some fond mother's heart watching her sail,
And children's prayers that guard a father's life.
He hears the billows grating on the keel,
With their gay sheets of foam and splashing lights,
The gulf-stream past, where over Pico's cap
Sail the rich odors of the Western Isles,
And sweeping showers that cut like wings of steel ;
And the long steady gale that never lulls,
Drawn through the rigging with its awful moan,
Most like the concert of the monarch-pines
That line Katahdin's walls, when the nor'westers
Scourge that woodland brig : these sounds he hears,
These sights, unmoving, sees ; Neptune forgot,
Thinks of his mother knitting by the fire
In his far-sheltered cot, his wife, who lists
As o'er his cottage-roof tears the wild gale,
And hears the children, " Mother, the storm !

Will father feel the gale?" — "My child, my child!"
And folds them to her heart. Oh, mother dear!

Had but those ancients ventured o'er the wave
Like patient Colomb, urging vessels small
Across the ocean's heap, and thus surpassed
Their shining bays and sands of Punic cape,
Where still bold rovers from the Grecian isles
Dart their swift galiots at the opiate Turk;
Then had the Muse of Homer taken flight
In things cosmopolite, leaving the gods
To curl their locks unsung. But so a race
Born on that midland sea achieved new fates,
And first essayed the arts of culture there,
Founding vast cities on the mud of Nile,
Where the great river, treasure of the earth,
Spawned affluence. If old Egypt be
The creature of the river, or reverse,
Becomes me not; if mimic Palestine
Took its first lessons off Egyptian stones,
As that Sidonian with Astarte's name,

On Eshmunezzar's soros found so late ;
Or when great Nineveh threw up its halls
Cased with prodigious bulls and bearded saints,
And conquering tyrants trampling on their slaves ;
Whatever prescience or rank assigned
To those veiled dynasties sunk in the sleep
Of superstitious gods, and what the priest
That worshipped Moloch sprang from : grant the sea
Gave impulse to those countries, and from that
They flowed with fresh existence. Yes ! that sea
And its expanse of isles blest by each other ;
In azure waves where rugged Rhodes piles up
Eternal sunshine, and Telmessus sweet,
With Lycian bays, the wood-nymphs' chosen haunt,
(For here the mainland floats upon the sea) ;
Or Cyprus, where the Paphian goddess built
Her tall melodious shrine, and, as some think,
Called from the tree to Aphrodite vowed,
And earlier to Astarte, whence it passed
From proud Phœnicia's Tyre to Carthage bronzed ;
These isles, good halfway-houses to new shores,

Nurtured the mariner on fruit and wines,
Honey and figs, and more, the grace to touch
New customs, and deport novel religions
'Mid a hulk of freight.

The timid sailors
Made small prime essays, and, venturing forth,
Amused themselves with colonies. At first
How limited the risk! The single ship
Bore off from Egypt's shores the chosen troop.
Soon, to the Grecian palm directly steered;
Where o'er Morea's hills the setting sun
Shames our opaque seclusion in its pomp;
There with the Corybants, or Bacchic priests
Lighting on Latmos, or by Delphi's shrine,
Unnamed, unknown, in those anterior days,
They sowed the seed upon the rolling heights
Of new religions, whence Olympus sprang;
And oaks Dodonian, comedy of creeds
Bred on the banks of Nile; and the tall stones
Now standing in her deserts, lone, not mute,

Bear witness that the race, forever one,
As on Mount Serbal, worships in high place,
Or still preserves the forest as its shrine,
And builds its altars on erected hills,
That mark Cholula's platform, to this hour.
Spring and fruit and fall the like traditions.
See the bold ranks of sepulchres that mask the vale
Of Kedron, line Telmessian hills; their doors,
Oblivious still, sealed up for ages.
As o'er the plains of Memphis, and the tomb
Of royal Cheops, where the Grecian stood,
That flaming star of Macedon, whose trail
Burnt from the shores of Greece to India's vale
Of far Cashmere, dreaming 'mid snowy crags, —
And wondered at the mass, what ages gone,
Whose ignorance shall boast? or by whose hands
The placid sphinxes fronting Karnak's mass,
Or Memnon's figure, musical at morn.
Ever the tomb, the dead, the mummied faith,
As if our race, the phantom of a day,
Spurning their nature's flight, had haughtily fixed

Upon our frame, cheap mirror of the dust,
For great enduring; scattered pyramids,
Sculptured the soros, and o'er Euxine's plain
Marched out the line of tumuli that stalks
Across the steppés, league on league afar,
Thoughts for Herodotus and Strabo dead,
And Clarke! that proudest of the Anglic race;
Or Calmuc, with his brandies made of milk;
And equine Cossacks, from whose hairy lip
Norse or Icelandic vocals lingering fall.

Thus did life's youthful mood vouchsafe,
Glimpses unknown to us, when Grecian isles
Were first discoveries, and all westward lay
Regions unkempt, the haunt of wolf or elk;
Seas unmolested, where no keel e'er trod,
Save of the savage proa, flying thing,
With long outriders propping up her sides.
Grand opened on the lids of Carthage fierce,
Sicilian isles, the granaries of Rome;
Vast to the spoiling Romans towered the snows

Of Alpine glaciers, or the rushing shaft
Where the unfathomable crevasse
Nurses her torrents, — feeders of Lucerne,
And wild moraine, slow moving to the foot,
Lifts not its head, nor heeds the avalanche
Crashed o'er its face. From Asia's heated soil
A fiery race wide roving spread around,
Whate'er their famed progenitors enjoyed ;
At Suez, where the Red Sea ends its toil,
Or through the gate of tears pursued their way
Into that Indian Ocean. The great king,
Famed for his tastes barbaric, fetched his pearls,
And peacocks, apes, and Sheba's queen, be sure,
From fertile islands in spice-wafting-roads,
Whate'er distortion later critics paste
Upon the Hebrew story.

So the page
Of human action prints the rolling trait.
So, in the Malay races Vedic creeds,
Cut on rock-temples of the Indian main,

Transport by sea, revive the Brahmin's faith ;
So, o'er the yellow desert's weary sand
The fainting legend flies its thirsty way,
Flows down Euphrates' valleys, or encamps
On her flat shores. And wandering tribes of men,
Gypsies that rob all nations of the orb,
And Arabs, whose sharp letters serve the Turk
And Persian, Indian, Hebrew, all as one,
Drifting the seeds of knowledge o'er the lands,
Reflex portray in all the human symbols.
As in the Indian's Veda, so to us.
Even if beneath a cloak of legend
Supernaturally strange, whate'er the Greek
Raised to devotion, yet o'ermastering thrills ;
The Pythian shrine, its oracle we hear,
Whether from hempen drug or nitrous air
Frankly diffuse, or trance mesmeric deemed,
Coming in dress of spirits, or such things
As nervous Macbeth played through Shakspeare's
brain,
Or writing morals on the mountain wall,

And raising circles from Druidic stones ;
Yet must the curious instinct of the race
Demand its mystery. Still St. Peter's shrine
Holds its portentous shadow o'er old Rome,
And Abraham's oak at Mamre blossoms on.

Where'er the glass you hold, reflected clear,
Priesthood and king, — names of the fatal powers, —
On most the nations' signets stamped full deep.
Always the nations marvel at themselves ;
Responsive to the past, serve king and priest ;
Such as the hoary Shagpat on the slab
That Layard at Koyunjik dug, and sent
To English halls, one like this mitred saint
From learned seats and colleges to us
Preaches obedience to our cherished creeds,
A secular law, or an unlovely prince ;
Drawing glazed portraits of the Prussian king
Who took Silesia, justice in his strength.
Forever cutting in the claw of might, —
The sword, that hell-born cruelty, our race,

Crudely regarded human, venerate!
Kingdoms are bolted to this butcher-sword;
And poor defenceless knaves, wrenched from their hearths,
Soon at the cannon's mouth blown into rags.
The ruling princes searching swift (those sateless wolves!)
More means of shedding blood, and their poor tools
Hang up in Heaven their dismal reeking corpse, —
Glory and murder burden of their strain.

From Macedonia's chief to the last wolf
That ravaged Roman earth, or what the race
Who people the new world have there essayed
To emulate the elder, whence they sprang;
Age after age the red procession goes,
Sateless, unsated, lapping at the pool
Of useless carnage, as if thus alone
The humane soul, born to the noblest thoughts,
Bred on choice reasons, and devoutly tasked,
Could found their best religion, raised to heaven,
By multiplying human miseries.
To try how clean the whizzing shell impelled

Shall shear in twain the hamlets of the poor;
Or by what law of steam and iron, ships
May smite, and with their fiery rain submerse
Walls of civility and cultured works;
Then, maddened on the wave, in frenzied strife
Sink with their crews to Pluto's tireless arm.
Noble the ghoul who swills most human blood,
Who makes the solitude, and calls it peace!
Would glory, honor, or the crimson chain
Scored on the conqueror's lurid brow, pour forth
Their ruddy flame as signet-rings of Oude,
If the grim field, planted with loathsome trunks
Of what this morning were the living pride
Of happy nations, now in sackcloth clad,
Got its true name, — the shambles of a king?
There see the sad array of captives march,
Sent to the cruel prison, long to bide,
Till the two angry monarchs, murder-tired,
Cease battling, all their recompense a grave!
Then mayst thou hear the anthem of the Church,
The proud *Te Deum* echoing to the skies,

As in Vienna's walls, when Pandours wild
Burnt some lean village on Bavaria's front,
Roasting the peasants in their frenzied rage.

On Nineveh's long wall in sculpture huge,
Where'er the regal pageant of the time —
Nebuco or Semiramis — crawls forth,
Upon the patent of the numerous wars
Done by the bearded peacock and his tail,
Behold, always with special emphasis,
Slaves trailing their chains. So downward far
To Rome's triumphant hours, the slave.
There Cleopatra in her beauty gleams,
And dark Jugurtha facing Rome goes by.
On Afric's sand, as well where Bornou's lake
Through the green sedges bears the fellah's boat;
As in the desert, when the caravan,
Bound for Morocco, marks its deathly trail
By the bleached bones of fainting youth and maid,
(Slaves captured for Numidia); or where Nile,
Wrenched from the Abyssinian mountains

Black and wild, whirls down the cataract
The coffle swart of wretches stolen to sell, —
With war, its source, treads human slavery!
Should a free Roman dig, or press the grape,
Save as Falernian to his weary lips,
With the scourged victim of his cruel wars
Crouched in the atrium, shuddering o'er his scars?
So triumphed down the demon; so espoused
The cause of blood: and from our shores, slavers,
Firing their guns along the Guinea coast,
Signal to send their human freight aboard;
Where the ripe culture of the Portuguese
In Christian morals and the Holy Faith,
Is the slave-factory, and its horrid field,
On which the corpses of the victims, flung
To Hades at the fever's mad command,
Bleach in the pestilent suns; and those who live
(Worse doom), wafted to states of liberty,
Employ the constant lash, and sate the hound
Brought from good Spain with all his native taste
For human gore; then shall they hoe and plant

For the North, till the white fields of cotton,
The government maintain, and on the cross,
Bleeding and nailed for life, die in their tears.
That fatal freedom to this hour ruled all!
But for a son of justice, lent from heaven,
Great Ossawatomie; who dashed his own,
His children's hearts against the demon-power,
And broke the captive's chain, and gave his name
Such glory as shall still less fade from thought,
(As time demanding damns the slavish fiends
Who drank his blood), but all the more blaze forth!

Oft on the marge of that small isle I sat,
Recalling all I knew about the sea,
And how much pleasure I to it had owed, —
A sheltered island tenderly caressed
In the soft billows, parted from the main
By a continuous beach, that miles along
Lists to the wail of ocean, and the cry
Of the light sand-piper: daintily his way
He picks along the cobbles of the marge,

Nor fears the wild commotion. In these frail,
These touching correspondences of love
In nature's vast dominion, man should build,
If anywhere, foundations for his creed,
And find on Alpine summits daisies bright,
And beds in bloom, fragrant of strawberry, —
There, on the concave of the eternal snow!

At times, I traced the fast foam-speeding boats
Whirl like the herring gulls along their track,
As if about to sink in ocean's maze,
Then in the narrowing pass obscurely lost,
I saw them turn, and with forecasting skill
Against the wind, a sinuous course retrace.
Not the mysterious voice that Hugo hears
Comes forth to them from ocean; not to them,
But a poor rag their canvas stilled the gale;
To such the sea is but another field,
Their saving care like the dry husbandman's, —
Fishers of men? That voice they seldom hear.
Save the old cedars eying the four winds,

Pledged to the azure sky and the gray stones,
And russet fields, parched in the July sun,
Upon that isle, Poseidon more is king,
Than lobster-fishers skimming o'er the wave.
Here, in the rudest clime of all our year, —
In stern December, — touched the Pilgrim boat,
Shallop then called; just where I muse, perchance;
And onward marched the crew, and sought the rock
Loftiest of all, to view the neighboring bay,
Albeit the isle should then in thickset wood
Have closed their view, — came off the Mayflower,
While their worn vessel lay outside the beach.
O'erhead December's frown, ice at their feet,
And the old ghostly cedars whispering, "Peace!"
Grandly they raised a hymn of cheerful faith;
The sacred chorus mixing with the gale,
And stormy snow-cloud trailing down the path.
Far lay their homes, — those English homes so dear;
Vacant their hearthstones, and their fields untrod;
Soft with Atlantic mist their vaporous skies
Draping with mossy wreaths the churchyard-stones;

Their hallowed abbeys sweet with eglantine
And old traditions in the English heart,
Built up of love. Oh, unlike this, so drear!
A savage air they never felt before
Amid the ice-clad bowlders on the snows;
The owl far hooting and the panther's scream,
And Indian war-cry echoing down the wood,
And fears, in courage quenched forevermore.

VI.

THE CAPE.

On native soil, pushing yet southernward,
Where the gay sand-dunes color Wellfleet's brow,
And earlier some few years adventuring brave,
Old Gosnold struck the land, searching this way
For treasure; and despatched a company,
Who viewed off Truro's height the Atlantic wave
Far reaching down the east its purple shades,
Chasing the green with red, and the low moon
Trail her soft radiance o'er the glimmering sea.
Then, too, the unceasing music of the surf,
Heard in our waking dream, disturbs the air
Not merely with its sound, but that salt savor
Dear to inland minds. Brave Champlain earlier
Touched these golden sands, castles afar
Skirting the icy bay, then sped his flight

Across to Acadie ; while Gosnold, lingering,
Found Naushawn, and Indian isles he gave
Eliza's name, where in the currents build
The coral insects, as on Omai's shore,
Their curving foliage for the gracile sea,
Warm from the Gulf Stream. Seeking here, he met
Groves built of sassafras, then filled his bark,
And sped an ocean flight. But Champlain bold
Tracked the great river, there where Cartier sailed,
Long ere those days, to Montmorenci's fall,
And where, o'er all the land, her piercing gaze,
Proud of her shining bulwarks, Quebec throws,
And eyes afar the trackless brush that sweeps
Its wilderness far north, where Baffin steered ;
And near, the vast St. Lawrence, a deep tide
Coursing from inland seas than it more vast ;
Waters like greenest gems of ocean mass
Compact, that proudly roll their emerald sheets
Over Niagara's edge ; and farther down,
Below fair Orleans isle, the traveller seeks
Thy roar, St. Anne, hymn to the voyageur, —

Clad in primeval Thuyas, ghostly trees,
Where thy uncounted fall shakes the dark earth:
So Verrazani and Sebastian stern,
With brave Sir Humphrey, sailed our baffling shores.
Then, even to the lake that loves his name,
And holds the haughty Adirondacks glassed
Within its mirror, where the Iroquois,
A race sepulchral battling for their scalps,
Swept clean the war-path, Champlain fearless went.
Far greater than them all, that trusting soul,
The patient Genoese, whose name this land
Most fitly bore. How are they sped to nought! —
All save the Mayflower's children, or their race;
And, if not done, surviving in lean tribes
Haunting the Cordilleras and the Plain,
And such as 'neath Potosi dig the ore,
Or for their Cuban slave-pen fiercely strike.

If, now, a fable held, the legend old,
That gives the hardy Norse, seafaring men,
The true discovery of our rock-bound world,

And the strange name of Vineyard to the sound,
From Vinland and the Dane, perchance is truth.
So the first human craft seen on this coast,
A Biscay shallop with its crew, one clad
In seaman's costume and their copper pot,
That welcomed Gosnold on the Eastern shore,
Spake of another captain, other ship,
As sea-King Norse from Iceland's fords, whose words,
Household to us, flow in the English tongue.
What unknown ages, what crude centuries,
Since first New England's cape and that Blanche bay,
Our Massachusetts water, flowed with life!
Since first Cape Cod kept the tautog secure
From the cold ocean north his narrow stripe,
Or bade the crowd of shells south of his sands,
Never to pass that line; what eras past
Had the hot Gulf Stream, torn from Carib seas,
Rounded Nantucket's shore, and warmed the wave
That sweeps Fairhaven ere the trembling sloop,
Product of human labor, touched her strand!

And when shall ride a future deluge forth,
Back to the royal Proteus sweeping all?
Man questions deep in nature; but the plan,
Darkly significant of struggling chance,
Repeats the conflict of a rising world;
Ages where he did not participate,
With one-horned donkies and wing-fingered bats
Shuffled together, and the type obscured;
Lizards that flew; and armadilloes vast
Flopping in orchid-swamps, or dreaming out
Primeval leisures beneath tree-fern bowers.
Then came a page scrawled with hyena lines,
Species of bears and hairy elephants
Lumped at the pole, as if, prolific mind,
The generous mother never could enough.
In vain she crept, she flew at large, she crawled,
And sought to bridge the swamps by making peat,
Age after age, or sketched patterns of trees,
Pine after beech, and beeches after oak;
Beast following beast she tried, and nice
Condensed her shelly refuse into hills;

Then pushed the flashing quartz and granites red
Up the volcano's spout, or earthquake's scar.
Yet she succeeded crudely, striving on,
In this life-struggle for new living forms,
To mould superior creatures, and a globe
Better contrived for permanence to fill.
Vast was the stride from creatures without spine,
To upright columns, and a pivot crown,
The termination of the cord: here she rested;
Here she said, as 'twere, "The work is done.
Thus much my ages bring." Yet beings stride
Ever to brighter regions, struggling through
The ranks of species to complexer form.
May not the winged prototypes be joined
To human structure, now too much embayed,
Collapsed in its own gravity, fixed to support,
Or hang upon the orb, a two-legged thing;
For slowly up, a downcast race, man trod:
Tried the gorilla rough and clumsy built,
Or, on all fours, protrusive crept about
Till times of principle evoked back-bone.

Years ere the Pilgrim Mayflower came and found
Those Plymouth treasures, Gosnold with his men,
As oft we say, landed on Wellfleet's sands;
And Brereton and Arthur crossed the cape
To scan the broad Atlantic, where to-day
The Beacon stands: the Highland light upon
The clay-pit's brink, well should the sailor know,
Lest he confuse this Pharos with the next,
That stars its long Cape Race, or that more east,
With Nauset. Often have I dwelt content,
Pleased with the extending scene, and loved the man
Of genial nature and observant eye,
Who kept the light.

As old tradition lives
Along this coast, like those who came of old
(Danes or bold Norse), and named it Wonder Strand,
The men are fishers. Venturous their craft,
Quick-speeding schooners ploughing the blue main;
And rightly in its bud they named this shore, —
A silent hamlet sown on lonely sands,
Watered with widows' tears and children's sobs,

The fishers' home, — calling it Dangerfield.
And if the gale from George's in its wrath
Rolls o'er these passive fields, as if its power
Would sweep the humble houses off the land,
And make new barks of them to search the seas,
Well may the hamlet shudder in the gale.
That fatal line upon the graveyard sod,
That far amid the lonely wastes is set,
Where fifty souls out from this little flock,
Sunk in one fatal storm, buried alive, —
There in the mountains of the ingulfing wave,
Reads the dread lesson common on these hills!
Ask of your guide, who in the modest house
On that side lives, or this. Each house alike
Widow and children left to mourn the loss
Of him buried at sea. And nothing less,
Each fresh recurring season views the sails,
Bent forth, whiten the azure circumstance,—
The fleet just parting off for George's banks.
From that high cliff I looked o'er Truro's beach,
And saw beneath, the far unending strand

Coping with all the waves, and never wrecked.
There, too, town of the Province, built on sand,
Like Venice, lovely, sheltered in the wave,
With all its spires bright looming in the air,
When the mirage puts forth a playful arm,
And draws the smiling pageant through the haze.
Here first the pilgrim touched; he praised her soil;
He sung about her groves, like mariners
Hungry for inward pleasures, emerald green,
To whom the sward is heaven.

There's no place
I ever wandered in upon this earth,
Sweeter at sunset than the little vale
Crossing above the lighthouse, where is seen
No trace of human dwelling, nor a track
Scooped by the toilsome wagon in those sands;
So still, so fragrant with the fresh sea-air
Caught from the beach. The broad-leaved golden-rod;
And grass ill-named of poverty; and that plant,
The perfumed Mayflower, with the long beach-grass;
And copses blushing all of bright wild rose, —

Enhance the scene; and the soft sparrow's note
Comes from the ground, so well Savanna named,
As if her song in that pure element,
Blest in seclusion, welled up from the herb,
One with the peaceful cricket's twilight strains.
Yet ever haunts the ear a hush of sounds,
Making the silence sweeter; and how soon,
(If your adventurous foot demand,
And standing on the verge) you see beneath,
The sparkling lines of ever-rolling surf,
On the patient sand crashing their cannon! —
The glistening sprays torn off the breaking waves,
Bright lights and changeful greens, and floating wrack,
And that *unwearying* breeze. Oh! yet withdraw,
And in sweet contrast find the silence deep,
As if the pulses of the earth were stilled
Beyond the power of thought, or dream to speak,
Communing with the spirit of the sea,
Most like the mountain's voice when evening greets
You, silent, on his cliffs.

And often came
To this consoling valley one whose bloom
Partly had faded off a cheek of rose,
When not yet twenty summers for her form
Had wound their wreaths of beauty. She had known
The city's culture, nursed by ceaseless love,
And that devoted heart to mothers lent,
And unto them alone. But oft her thoughts,
In the proud mansion on the city street,
Strewed with the loans of luxury that time
Wafts down o'erpowering from the burdened past,
Wandered to this seclusion. And she saw
The rolling wave tossing its sand and shells;
The shining pebbles murmuring at her feet,
And felt the breath of the pure living waters
Thrill her reviving frame. Her song she raised:
"Oh, I would be a daughter of the sea!
On the dull land I feel the death of life,
That bars away my soul from all I love,
Where sleeps the heart I never thought to lose.
The open air, the bright and cheerful day,

Bringing my frame their reasonable toil, —
They make repose, seem joy. But in these streets,
On custom pensioned, and constraint in form,
My thoughts feel feverish as an imprisoned bird
Against life's narrow bars, — narrow and steeled.
Oh, I would be a daughter of the sea!
To list its ceaseless song, and think no more
Of all this weary and incessant shore;
Hiding a breaking heart behind a mask
Made of conspicuous trifles, pointed fine,
And wounding to the last. Afar my boat
Should ride the foaming distance, as the prow
Tossed off the whitening rancor of the wave,
And let the breeze blow free, and my wild speed
Shall emulate its own."

VII.

HILLSIDE.

Eve coming slowly down, at peace we marked
From higher places the low sun decline
Across the bay, pouring o'er Monimet
A flood of ruddy light that made more rich,
Her decorous robe of crimson, — autumn's robe
Of berry-bearing plants and changing trees,
Responsive to that glory. Thence I gazed
With a more fond emotion; for the hills
Contained, or rather might conceal, that house, —
Mansion I fitlier call it. Gothic hall,
With colonnade like Reinsberg's own, contract
To a more private scale; and slated roofs
So purely French, pierced with such frames, that one
Not comely in herself, thence looking, gained
A face. Below were sheltering lattices,

With ample steps beat from the granite ledge,
That borders the fleet brook, most merrily
And in all seasons running down the lawn, —
Stream like Voltaire's, heard in the cheerful rooms.
Far and in lavish taste were ranged around
The labyrinthine walks, their ample shades
Contrived from growths of cultured affluence.
The medlar here pursued his quaint decay,
Near by the chalky hazel's stunted limb,
Or loaded figs sweet as e'er Smyrna grew;
Bohemian olive, orange-scented joy,
And sunny laburnum. Here shrubs divine,
Noble wigelia, roseate-blushed and white,
A summer wreath of glory, clothed the copse;
Or rich forsythia glittering like the fall,
And delicate as lace the pure white fringe, —
Each in its season on the enamoured air,
Breathed its soft beauty. And such flowers unveiled
As might adorn the Psyche in her bower, —
Gay-leaved geraniums, with rich fuchsias lake,
Pendant as graceful drop in loveliest ears;

And Scottish daisies like the peasant's song,
That taught its tender fame, Eolian Burns,
A flower to shine beneath the Scottish birch, —
Tree Wordsworth calls, "the lady of the wood."
The gardens delicate with quality
Of luscious spoil, from Eastern realms conveyed, —
From Japan's fields her lilies' golden gleam,
Or whate'er Fortune in his pleasant trips
O'er China, thought an English charm ; all lands,
And farthest skies raining their splendors down.
On the two sides touching the garden, fields
Social in grain, or lapped in orchard-wealth,
The succulent pear, braced apples, or blue plum,
Nor less there bloom, dusk clusters of ripe grapes
Rounding the vines, and walnuts stately gold,
As tallest column of Sierra's stone,
On mellow autumn's hillside.

So within
Genially spread presides refining taste.
The buoyant day, forth wheeling in his car,
Revealed in Guido's dream, here lights the wall

Upon soft Phosphor's blush ; and near, the gaze
Instinct with manly genius and young strength,
Of Raphael ; his hand so sensitive,
Ne'er touched the pencil but to lift the art
Above the saint he drew, — St. Barbara,
Or holy Catherine bending on the tomb.
And copies of the famous or the fine,
From graver ages ferried to compel
Our admiration, — Dante's shrunken form
Thinking immensely, aquiline and spare ;
And polished Milton, creature of the court,
Munificent in diction ; and the one
Whose face, traditionally drawn, reveals
To thirsty hearts Judea's loveliest soul.
While from the humble shelves mild rural books,
As liquid Maro dulcet on his flute,
And timorous Cowper with his three pet hares,
Regale the evening circle in their verse ;
Unless the sweet piano fill the ear
Blithe in its strings, or with some soft-toned voice ;
The courtly grandam, nodding o'er her glass,
And famished girlhood studying out her eyes.

On the same spot, led down the sallow years
From the first impress of the Pilgrim's foot,
Mark this home, succeeding generations;
Cordial descent, more with each added stock
Perfecting the true kind; more mellow fruit,
More culture of the mind, by skilful grafts.
Thus even in the comforts of the house,
The early architecture swept remote,
A costly and convenient mansion stands.
And as in England, skilful heralds rate
The arms and quarterings of good families,
So here the annals of the line descend,
By ladies treasured up, who knit composed
In quiet corners; or by robust sons,
Walking behind their ploughshares; and wise clerks,
Who trace the lineage from town histories.
So that the workmen on such peasant farms,
If never king with garter violet,
And sword of diamond hilt, impressed the blood
With knightly crest, yet by well-ordered work,
Or what the patient mind contrives to raise,

Keep memory and pride about the place:
In these plebeian homesteads is the stamp
Of true nobility. A lettered boy,
Drilled in collegiate walls, perchance, ascends
The pulpit's height, or thunders at the bar;
Another to new shores ordains his wit,
Viewing Calcutta's halls, — a traveller;
The gentler fabric softly weaving in
With other households similar in gift;
Till from the fragile and short-lived estate,
As thought in foreign lands where entail holds,
Rises the solid profit of the farm.
And time above the dear familiar place
Depends in venerable elms;
Like citron bright their lichen-painted trunks,
Fruit of parmelia's skill; meantime the house,
Pride of aspiring builders, slowly brings
The right results. For in our tragic clime
The keen north-west drives through the gaping boards;
Nor less the east, rich with the sea it loves,

Undoes the shingle, and abstracts the nail;
Slates bloom instead, and rocks of trust,
Replace the wood-foundation; blithe the flowers
Drawn on the wainscots, and the Indian vase
Floating from Canton's river tints the porch.
When evening calls the family within,
Social and warm the ruddy curtains fall
Around the dreamy casements, till the war
Of the continuous surf upon the ledge,
That shores the ocean's ingress, whispering, lulls,
And fancy brings the forms of other days.

O loved and gone, the darling of our hearts!
With thy soft winning ways, caressing smiles,
And step more light than tracks the forest fawn;
Who taught the old how kind the young might be;
How often thy soft figure, wandering o'er
The breezy lawn, or couched within the shade,
Made sweeter music than all sounds beside!
Gone, oh, forever gone! alone she sleeps
Upon the hillside looking o'er the sea;

Alone? when every heart, full of thy worth,
Enchanting Julia, sends its love to thee.

Safe is this peaceful haunt, far from the town,
With all its noise forgot, and steeped in silence.
No shrieking train let forth pants rumbling by;
No factory-bell, the presage of man's toil,
Infects the ear. Soft in its sovereign groves
The dwelling stands of one I knew of yore, —
He truly for seclusion framed, yet graced
With kindly instincts and delightful tastes,
I ever valued, as a hope for them,
Who love the simple scenes of rural bliss.
In cities' throngs might he have haply moved,
And held conspicuous reins in civil crowds,
Had not the charitable God supreme,
With lovelier council given him space to be,
The happiest man of all this earthly state, —
A valued scholar, and, addition blest!
Who made his hillside lovely to his friends,
And, loving, was beloved.

There, in soft dreams
Of hope, I half forgot the old complaint
Against the ambitious crowd who throng the mart,
Supreme each in his own conceit, or first
Might prove, if but allowed due scope, and ripe
For quick promotion. So the centuries flit;
And yet the god admires to people cities,
Arch over arch rebuilds their gates, and fills
The gaps cut by besiegers with their guns,
When the hot fight, on Prague or Warsaw fell,
Or Wolfe outdid Montcalm, and sealed his days.
How fulgent speed the suburbs, once the torch
Of Hecate to the walls applied! Sudden
In empty air the granaries fly aloft,
The year's tanned labor wasted on a spark,
Leaving the land disconsolate, where peace
Just softly cradled raised her Saviour's head.
Not from poor hamlet's sheds go forth the ranks,
But Potsdam rich in palaces, or Ghent
And Paris, camp supreme since Julian's days,
Where yet his thermæ fast by Cluny's halls

Attest the spot, where the vague soldiery
Of latter Rome, swore fealty to their lord. —
Clustered together much like bees in cells,
Close, if unmingled, the associates dwell,
Where meagre penury hitches the skirt
Of silken grandeur, and hungry beggars
Swarm, gathering up cast-out bones, envious
Of the dogs well-fed. Just God! my heart
Bleeds to its depth to feel the children's woe,
Nurtured in rags, uncombed, unwashed, and starved,
Squalid by brutal license, reared in pain,
Old ere their youth has come, to steal and beg
Their joyous privilege. Who grateful sees
The scarlet carriole and the pampered steeds,
With a bedizened load of sickly dames? —
A tatter from their lace enough support
For poor folks half the month, good Christians too ;
Fatal such contrast, accident at best.
No farthing wasted on the shivering child ;
Then to the prison haled, the wretched thief
Plaything of grizzly sinners, learns his task,

Bible of righteousness, preached in those schools,
And graduates soon fine scholar.
One I knew,
A thinking man, his days in mercy spent,
Who sought to mitigate these carrion forms,
And raise some fresh emotion in the heart,
For them, cast out to ignorance and vice.
But then the o'ercrowded city crowding grows,
And breeds the plague that riots in its squares;
Builds up foul court-yards and unholy lanes,
The fountains of pollution; and endows
The university of thirst and lust
Patron of wickedness, — the lodger's crib; swiftly
The prison's cell receiving its refuse.
What are the costly prints that hide the walls
Where swelling Angelo his prophet seats,
And sibyls, big in muscle; what the stone
Smooth in Canova's taste, or gaslit throng
Clapping the tiresome Hamlet?
Can we sink
The dark and dangerous classes in the mire,

Safely obliterate? and at our ease
Napping behind the curtains, and delight
With spendthrift opulence of ill-got wealth,
And sideboard blazed with plate, omit the claim
Of human misery, fainting at the door?
Or shall we haunt the porches, taste the cool
And philosophic shade where wisdom sits
Upon its nodding throne, and heaps the page
With fruit luxuriant from the spells of Greece,
What Gorgias taught? There, in those seas of froth,
On which the unballast mind pursues
Its vagrant theories, with helm suppressed,
Heaping its dust in weary sophistries
To pamper future pedants; — there forget
In our release, the sufferings of the wretch
In tattered garb, his letters never learned,
Who rakes the city gutter for his meal?

Mother of arts and arms the City stands,
Bred by long centuries to lead the race,
And resting on her hero's head the crown,

Who makes the great occasion civil named,
Term by the learned, fashioned ; civil,
Almost polite. Old temples line her streets,
Palace and arch, and Trajan's theatre
Where the Christian fed the starved lioness,
Caught in Numidia, with his lean flesh,
That thus Rome's emperors, applaud by sweaty palms,
Might drink a bloodier triumph. Now, it serves
The pardoning popes. Simply, if handed down,
Race worships most, the custom of the race,
Preserving man, and for long ages pets
The dead prerogative as if man's doom ;
In Copan or Palenque, from strange shrines
Plump out new gods ; or giant from its mud
Cardiff displays, there near the shallow stream,
Mutely forlorn, half asking to be spared,
Appropriate transcript of the natural man,
Hero of the old days ! There he dreams, —
The antique figure, carted from his bed,
Dreams of the time he shot the hippogriff
Trooping about his plains heavy with nightshade ;

Or in his torrid swamps bestrode that beast,
The ichthyosaur, and listens to the yells
Of sharp hyena with the savans' talk,
As they debate his bones, and draw the plan
On which young nature laid his wide expanse.
Now drifted to the cities, he may hear
The swarm of pygmies buzzing at the door,
And, for the peal of ages on his case,
Remark the civic clock, politely tuned,
Shoot forth meridian time; the frantic crowd
That worry by his weight breathless to add
A blossom to their days, while his fell off,
Or ever Adam gave the palm to Eve.
Fearing the myth, they ridicule his age;
Less credible, they deem a hero dead
Than insects scarce conceived.

Far eras gone,
Magnificoes like this, old earth put forth,
That pave the brooks in Cardiff to this hour.
Races cropped out, and steady came the dream, —

The giant; the Goliaths fought and fell;
Vain was the search, while every shape of beast
Reckoned incredible the soil produced.
The civil congregation fed and died
In war and peace conceiving; but no work
Of sculpture ere the flood, or man of mould
Twice in his stature topping o'er the kind,
Till that good farmer of the Cardiff vale
Flat in the boggy drain barely concealed,
The fossil creature found. Model the form;
Brow of Caucasian eminence and depth;
His figure average in Camper's scale;
And neck and skull right as a theory.

Behold the entrance of a form in light,
From nations gone ere China or Japan
Baked clay pagodas, and, delightful gleam,
Bushels of Indian hatchets sank to please
Detective Lyell in the Amiens sand,
Or Switzer lake enjoyed the pile-built town.
Form water-worn; the mouth half eaten out,

And half the arm ; the soles all honey-combed ;
The stone of easy grain, and wrought with art.
More as some serious Roman looks it there
Than the brief creatures flitting on the streets
Bandaged in narrow garments fit to hide
Their scanty moulding. For that native drape
(Such as it is) outdoes the Roman baldness
Ere wig or peruke troubled the occiput.
And never in the brilliant forms of stone
That crowd the Vatican more royal shape
Of young Augustus, or Vespasian stern,
Or Sophocles, — the tall, commanding Greek.

Go search the page lucid with polished fiction,
Note the dim fable darkly lengthening down
From Tyre's first castle to the hour that cuts
Our dusty sunshine, — history bereft
Of combination. Selfish crowds still fret
The frosty streets, humanity obscured ;
The grating wheel creaks in the iron rut ;
Never will man his individual brass

Melt in a common pot, nor stretch the roof
For a whole people. Oft the married twain,
Engaged in private broil, deplore the scratch.
Thou crazy Frenchman with a ciphering pen,
Fourier! so scantly fed, yet firmly bent,
Attraction-mad, on sea of lemonade
To float the ripe community, where, knit
In genial temper, the attractive band
Of cohort butterflies, sunning their wings
Along the phalanx walls, and self forgot,
Thus must collapse labor competitive.
Alas! the butterflies loved colored gauze, —
This purple and that brown, for which they struck;
And cider-lemonade became small beer.
This legion envied that; the pivot stood
Slow rooted in the wheel, — a general sleep,
Attractive industry, thy tribes possessed.

Much men enjoy the anxious strife and jar,
And scheme demonstrative for pelf and power:
The toughest rules the trade. In its stone bank

On yonder corner, the Napoleon brain
Controls the dancing stocks, and in a twist
Of its persuasive lid depletes the bond,
And undermines its rate. Such heaven is this, —
The sharp and pungent sniff 'twixt man and man ;
The neighbor's hand pressing the neighbor's throat,
Then fathoming his purse. The bright-rouged clerk
His equipage complete, flown on blood-coursers,
Forges his master's check to sate his duns ;
The decimated globule teased to fame,
And grown profuse on the self-seeking puff,
Carries a simile to beauty's lip.
Books pass by binding ; the tame laurelled bard
Wire-drawing out the pretty, shallow line,
Nurses at Spenser's fount his conscious babe.

Angel of Liberty in simple robe,
The dame, now past her youth, discourses much
Of rights and equities, and asks the urn.
Haste ! let her trail those ribbons in the crush
Of unbribed patriots blushing from the bar,

And drop her vote. Freedom for all decrees
Laws unrestricted ; end this imprisoning sex.
As grand Theresa, Austria's fondest boast,
To whose young babe the nation made the vow,
"Yes! for our king as one man shall we die ;"
Her woman's breast, too sensitively proud,
And crossed by shadows from an aching nerve,
Drowned in a sea of blood the Austrian land,
Then for peace kneeled ; and Cleopatra's heart,
And Helen's, Homer's flame, the woman's right
Held in the throbbing pulse, of blood so frail!
One fruit of civic finesse there emerged,
Conceived in fearful phrase, the pompous laws,
Tradition of the Romans, when there sprang
Diana's temple new from St. Paul's yard ;
Narrow old precedents a Cæsar's craft
Bred in his thought to mask his scheming hand,
And into codes fused by Justinian.
Then hurried o'er the Atlantic, by our saints,
The righteous Puritans, their heads as dry
As the remainder biscuit ; laws and states

What ages more, riveted to the crowd!
Such bred the deeds of witchcraft, that his muse,
Our gentle-hearted Hawthorne's, touched so well,
Drawing a beauty out of all their cant,
And the self-lauding sect, moral in sin.
Headlong fall arch and fane, Silenus musing
Happy o'er his tun, and gay Bacchus tipped
In Ariadne's garlands; down with heaven,
And blue Olympus and its flashing court
Coming to wine in fashionable vests;
And Persian splendor at Persepolis,
Raised in its burning sunshine on the steps
With bands of dancing girls and horsemen fierce
Darting the jerrid; them we dream no more.

Surest of all the facts of mortal life
Men symbolize the meaning of the thoughts;
The Indian on his skin painting his bears,
And strange Peruvian on his quipo knots
Writing his stanza, down to Europe's pride,
Even to demonic Goethe, feats in words;

Great that Sanscrit's worth, who made the grammar,
Leaving the rest to follow as it might,
And Fin, with sixteen cases to one noun,
And Chinese calm, who wants no alphabet.
Where roams the tribe that never found its tongue?
While the poor beast, squeezed in one fettered strain,
Squeals inaccessible. Oh! should we not
As Indians with each spring consume the town,
Seeking new hunting-grounds and larger game?

Homeless and hopeless in those cruel walls,
Sybilla went, her heart long since bereaved.
She heard the footfalls sear the crowded streets,
Her fatal birthright, where no human pulse
To hers was beating. There she shunned the day!
Tall churches and rich houses draped in flowers,
And lovely maids tricked out with pearls and gold,
Barbaric pomp, and crafty usurers bent, —
All passed her by, the terror in her heart.
So sped she on the train, — a reindeer-course, —
Day's dying light painting the quiet fields,

The pale green sky reflected in the pools.
Oh! why was earth so fair? was love so fond
Ever consumed within the ring of fire?
That soft clear light that marks that heaven afar,
The emerald waters, and the evening star.

No more the tales that once the race of bards
Inspired, — of heaven's high court, or hell,
Of gods or god, Venus, and Mars; no more
The solitude of the high mountain's shrine;
Faded to night, irrevocably passed,
Where they may never be unloosed again:
A simpler and a sweeter lay demands
A new-born age, faintly demanding verse,
(For verse too high, or modulated prose),
The scholar's song, whom thought has made its own.
New times demand new powers; new powers, new men;
The old seems but a pale hypocrisy,
That myth of Serapis or Jupiter,
Vain word for us, and Brahma's holy grass,
Or *Om* (forbidden word), and Odin's skull

Rich with Valhalla's, and metheglin's fume.
But we might launch our gods, as they sang theirs,
Even as our clime and seasons native spring,
So now from us upsprings the myth to-day,
Or shall ere morning gild yon russet field?
Each holds his office, each his native skill,
By self in one part poised, by fate as much:
The rose can never bloom the lily's white,
Nor a still day usurp the whirlwind's roar.
Thus man is but a tool, that yet can draw
His one design on a wide-waving sea;
And though he sails on various voyages,
In different ships, and to as many ports,
The same sagacity, firm will, and faith,
Or luckless chance, yet guides his vessel on.

The glittering bait of power obstructs the mass, —
Mass we may frequent think, so few they stand,
Who, bent on higher ventures, tread Time's shore.
Around us weaves a thought we dimly feel,
As faint some moonlit shadow, flitting fast,

When the mild planet pearls our watery clouds,
And scarce reveals the light herself has made.
A thought is in the trees and seas and skies ;
Lurks on the river's breast, or skims the grove ;
Glitters at twilight off the folding clouds ;
Speaks from young eyes, and throbs within the heart,
Nameless, unfathomed, dark, yet loving light.
This life the scholar loves, this life he breathes ;
Without this life he could not tread the path
Of the low-falling world, to heaven the heir.
Who, then, might fitly chant of him whose eye
Is set so firmly in its parent cause? —
Not one of these plain fields and modest lot
The child, but some resplendent bard, whose verse,
Lit with celestial radiance, flashed the skies,
As sunset in her purples bathes the east
With a fore-painted morning.

From the grave he leads
Old glories to new life. His memory throws
Its still soft light across a heavenly path.

With saints, with priests, the wise, the great, he holds
A dread communion, and his thought embalms
Like amber, sweetness of all times. His hope
Hangs in the future; and his aim so high,
That yet through infinite ages vast
He still beholds a stream, where man shall sweep
To excel the glory of his present reign,
And thrones and empires stand where'er a man
Plants his firm tread on the subjected globe.
Make, then, his function saint-like and superb!
Be his the good to teach more than the old,
Revolving new society, new laws,
As in her frolic, nature upward soars
Through bush and glen and cedar-copses dark,
Where the blue berries show like ocean's bloom,
And o'er the chestnut hills whose gray rocks peep,
And far below, beyond, the sandy lake
Bears her retreating skies, and clouds the earth:
Where'er the face of things smiles or grows sad,
The scholar gleans, his faithful eye profound
To read the secret in each thing he sees, —
To love, if not to know.

His soul outbursts
The feebly measured current of his fate.
He rises like the sun in roseate pomp ;
Like him, he sinks in splendor down 'mid stars ;
As subjects to his throne, the learned haste, —
Focus for all their rays. For him the seas
They furrow with the sparkling keel of ships,
For him they iron o'er the land with flame,
And glass in lightning his projectile thought.
Nor less the star him pleasures in her speech,
Whether in volcan fierce she lifts the heavens,
Or casts in golden sand the river's chain.
His logic suits to each the prize he draws,
In great or less proportions. Let him rise
So long as the race rises, and in him
Its wise perfecting skilled creation claim !

THE END.

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